IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method to collect geographic location information, the method including:

collecting geographic location information, associated with a network address on an internet protocol (IP) network, the geographic location information being collected [[,]] from a plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents capable of individually performing at least one data collection operation in the IP network;

utilizing the geographic location information to associate a geographic location with the network address in the IP network; and

associating at least one confidence factor with the geographic location.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, including deploying the plurality of geographically dispersed agents at a plurality of respective and separate service providers.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the collecting of the geographic location information includes performing a traceroute search.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the collecting of the geographic location information includes determining validity of the geographic location information utilizing built-in metrics.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, including controlling the plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents utilizing a data collection broker.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, including controlling a further plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents utilizing a further data collection broker.

7. (Original) The method of claim 5, including, utilizing the data collection broker, determining which data collection agents of the plurality of data collection agents are most appropriate for the collecting of the geographic location information.

8. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein each of the plurality of data collection agents is to advise the data collection broker regarding a success or a failure of a search conducted to collect the geographic location information.

9. (Original) The method of claim 6, including transferring the collecting of the geographic location information from the data collection broker to the further data collection broker, associated with the further plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, including providing the geographic location information from each of the plurality of dispersed data collection agents to a data collection broker.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, including, utilizing the data collection broker, storing the geographic location information within a collection database.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein an analysis module utilizes the geographic location information to associate the geographic location with the network address.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents is capable of performing a plurality of data collection operations.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the plurality of data collection operations is in accordance with a plurality of analysis techniques utilized by an analysis module.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein a data collection broker is to determine which of the plurality of analysis techniques, utilized by the analysis module, is to be utilized by the analysis module with respect to the network address.

16. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein at least one of the plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents locally stores the geographic location information, collected utilizing one or more searches, and batch updates the data collection broker utilizing the locally stored geographic location information.

17. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the collecting of the geographic location information includes launching first and second traceroutes from respective first and second collection agents of the plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein each of the first and second traceroutes is with respect to the network address.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, including computing a similarity of the first and second traceroutes to generate a confidence factor for the geographic location associated with the network address.

20. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the association of the geographic location with the network address includes determining whether each of the first and second traceroutes proceeds through a common set of routers.

21. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the association of the geographic location with the network address includes determining that each of the first and second traceroutes terminates at or approximate the geographic location.

22. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the association of the geographic location with the network address includes extrapolating a direction indication for the geographic location, utilizing knowledge of locations of routers in each of the first and second traceroutes.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22, including extrapolating a plurality of direction indications utilizing the knowledge of the locations of the routers in each of the first and second traceroutes, and identifying the geographic location utilizing the plurality of direction indications.

24. (Currently Amended) A system to collect geographic location information, the system including:

a plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents being deployable in an internet protocol (IP) network, each of the plurality of data collection agents being [[,]] capable of individually performing at least one data collection operation[[,]] to collect geographic location information[[,]] associated with a network address in the IP network;

an analysis module to associate a geographic location with the network address in the IP network [[,]] utilizing the collected geographic location information; and

a confidence map to associate at least one confidence factor with the geographic location.

25. (Original) The system of claim 24, wherein the plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents are deployed at a plurality of respective and separate service providers.

26. (Original) The system of claim 24, wherein at least one of the plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents is to collect the geographic location information by performing a traceroute search.

27. (Original) The system of claim 24, wherein at least one of the plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents is to determine validity of the geographic location information utilizing built-in metrics.

28. (Original) The system of claim 24, including a data collection broker to control the plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents.

29. (Original) The system of claim 28, including a further data collection broker to control a further plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents.

30. (Original) The system of claim 28, wherein the data collection broker is to determine which data collection agents of the plurality of data collection agents are most appropriate for the collecting of the geographic location information.

31. (Original) The system of claim 28, wherein each of the plurality of data collection agents is to advise the data collection broker regarding a success or a failure of a search conducted to collect the geographic location information.

32. (Original) The system of claim 29, wherein the data collection broker is to transfer the collecting of the geographic location information to the further data collection broker, associated with the further plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents.

33. (Original) The system of claim 24, wherein each of the plurality of dispersed data collection agents is to provide the geographic location information to a data collection broker.

34. (Original) The system of claim 33, including a collection database, wherein the data collection broker is to store the geographic location information within the collection database.

35. (Original) The system of claim 24, including an analysis module to utilize the geographic location information to associate the geographic location with the network address.

36. (Original) The system of claim 24, wherein at least one of the plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents is capable of performing a plurality of data collection operations.

37. (Original) The system of claim 36, wherein the plurality of data collection operations is in accordance with a plurality of analysis techniques utilized by an analysis module.

38. (Original) The system of claim 37, wherein a data collection broker is to determine which of a plurality of analysis techniques, utilized by the analysis module, is to be utilized by the analysis module with respect to the network address.

39. (Original) The system of claim 33, wherein at least one of the plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents is to locally store the geographic location information, collected utilizing one or more searches, and to batch update the data collection broker utilizing the locally stored geographic location information.

40. (Original) The system of claim 24, wherein the collecting of the geographic location information includes launching first and second traceroutes from respective first and second collection agents of the plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents.

41. (Original) The system of claim 40, wherein each of the first and second traceroutes is with respect to the network address.

42. (Original) The system of claim 40, including computing a similarity of the first and second traceroutes to generate a confidence factor for the geographic location associated with the network address.

43. (Original) The system of claim 40, wherein the association of the geographic location with the network address includes determining whether each of the first and second traceroutes proceeds through a common set of routers.

44. (Original) The system of claim 40, wherein the association of the geographic location with the network address includes determining that each of the first and second traceroutes terminates at or approximate the geographic location.

45. (Original) The system of claim 40, wherein the association of the geographic location with the network address includes extrapolating a direction indication for the geographic location, utilizing knowledge of locations of routers in each of the first and second traceroutes.

46. (Original) The system of claim 45, including extrapolating a plurality of direction indications utilizing the knowledge of the locations of the routers in each of the first and second traceroutes, and identifying the geographic location utilizing the plurality of direction indications.

47. (Currently Amended) A machine-readable medium storing a set of instructions that, when executed by a machine, cause the machine to perform a method to collect geographic location information, the method including:

collecting geographic location information, associated with a network address in an internet protocol (IP) network, the geographic location information being collected [[,]] from a plurality of geographically dispersed data collection agents capable of individually performing at least one data collection operation in the IP network; and

utilizing the geographic location information to associate a geographic location with the network address in the IP network.

associating at least one confidence factor with the geographic location.

48. (Currently Amended) A system to collect geographic location information, the system including:

a plurality of geographically dispersed data collection means being deployable in an internet protocol (IP) network, each of the plurality of data collection means for collecting geographic location information [[,]] associated with a network address in the IP network;

an analysis means for associating a geographic location with the network address in the IP network [[,]] utilizing the collected geographic location information; and

a confidence map to associate at least one confidence factor with the geographic location.